

Serial No. 10/020,869
60130-1294;00MRA0564**REMARKS**

Claims 1, 4, 5, 17 and 20-23 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Queveau in view of WO Patent No. 01/14665 to Larabel. The Examiner states that Queveau teaches a waterproof trim panel, but admits that Queveau does not an O-shaped seal. The Examiner contends that Larabel teaches an o-ring, and it would be obvious to provide the elastic seal ring of Larabel in Queveau, and therefore the claimed invention is obvious. Applicant respectfully disagrees.

The claimed invention is not obvious. Queveau does not disclose that the entire trim panel 4 is a waterproof panel as claimed. Queveau discloses a trim panel 4 fixed on a support panel 3 that includes several openings which receive various elements. The openings in the trim panel 4 receive grills 61 and 93, as further shown in the Figure. Grills 61 and 93, by definition, include openings that would allow water to flow through the grills 61 and 93. The grill 93 is for a loud speaker and is clipped on the support panel 3 (page 5, paragraph 1 of the translation). The grill 61 is for an air duct 6 (page 4, paragraph 2 of the translation). The openings and the grills 61 and 93 for the speaker and the duct in the trim panel 4 would not allow the entire trim panel 4 to be waterproof and would not provide a waterproof barrier as claimed. The grills 61 and 93 would allow moisture to pass and therefore the entire trim panel 4 is not waterproof as claimed.

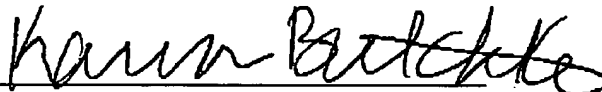
Additionally, the trim panel 4 of Queveau includes an opening 44 that allows a cladding sheet of the support panel 3 to be exposed (page 3, lines 22-24 of the translation). Therefore, even when the trim panel 4 is assembled, the entire trim panel 4 would not be waterproof and would not provide a waterproof barrier because water could flow through the opening 44. Larabel also does not disclose any waterproof panel. Therefore, the combination of the references does not disclose, suggest or teach the claimed invention. The claimed invention is not obvious, and Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection be withdrawn.

No additional fees are seen to be required. If any additional fees are due, however, the Commissioner is authorized to charge Deposit Account No. 50-1482, in the name of Carlson, Gaskey & Olds, P.C., for any additional fees or credit the account for any overpayment. Therefore, favorable reconsideration and allowance of this application is respectfully requested.

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Respectfully submitted,

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CERTIFICATE OF FACSIMILE

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being facsimile transmitted to the United States Patent and Trademark Office, 571-273-8300 on August 11, 2005.


Amy M. Spaulding